

Message Text

SECRET

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FM AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 5146
INFO AMEMBASSY CAIRO IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 TEL AVIV 11009

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY, ATHERTON AND SAUNDERS ONLY

FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PBOR, PEPR, EG, IS, US
SUBJECT: MORE THOUGHTS ON CAMP DAVID STRATEGY

REF: A) CAIRO 19298, B) TEL AVIV 10589, C) TEL AVIV 10418,
D) TEL AVIV 11005

1. BEFORE DEPARTING FOR WASHINGTON TOMORROW, AND AFTER MY
TALK WITH DAYAN YESTERDAY (REF D), IT MIGHT BE USEFUL TO
OFFER SOME FINAL THOUGHTS FROM HERE ON OUR STRATEGY FOR
CAMP DAVID. AM SEEING BEGIN TONIGHT AND WILL REPORT
SEPARATELY ON THAT MEETING.

2. I CERTAINLY AGREE WITH HERMANN EILTS THAT WE WOULD BE
ASKING A GREAT DEAL OF FLEXIBILITY FROM SADAT AT CAMP
DAVID IF HIS ONLY PAYOFF WERE TO BE A FOSTERING OF
DOMESTIC DEBATE IN ISRAEL. BUT HE WILL SURELY ALSO BE
SENSITIVE TO HIS RELATIONSHIP WITH THE PRESIDENT, THE
STRENGTH OF THE U.S.-EGYPTIAN TIE, AND HIS IMAGE AS A
PEACE MAKER IN THE UNITED STATES. THAT MAY NOT BE ENOUGH

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TO BRING HIM AROUND, ESPECIALLY IF BEGIN STANDS FAST. BUT
IT IS A GOOD DEAL MORE THAN ONLY TRYING TO INFLUENCE THE
FUTURE DIRECTION OF ISRAEL'S POLITICAL DEBATE.

3. LIKE HERMANN, I WAS INTRIGUED BY PERES' PROPOSED
LANGUAGE AT VIENNA ON BORDER CHANGES: "THERE WILL BE
CHANGES IN THE BORDERS BETWEEN THE WEST BANK AND ISRAEL

WHICH SATISFY THE ASPIRATIONS OF THE PALESTINIANS AND SATISFY THE SECURITY OF ISRAEL." THIS IS AN EXCELLENT FORMULATION, ESPECIALLY IF SADAT WILL PUBLICLY AGREE. I AM EXTREMELY DOUBTFUL, HOWEVER, THAT WE CAN GET THE ISRAELIS TO SWALLOW INCLUSION OF ANY LANGUAGE WHICH REAFFIRMS "THE INADMISSIBILITY OF ACQUISITION OF TERRITORIES BY WAR," UNLESS IT WERE QUALIFIED AS "WAR OF AGGRESSION." BEGIN IS COMPLETELY DUG-IN ON HIS VIEWS OF THE EVENTS OF 1967, AND NEARLY ALL ISRAELIS AGREE WITH HIM. REGARDLESS OF THE ANTECEDENTS IN THE 242 PREAMBLE, WE WILL NEED A READY FALLBACK POSITION FOR THIS LANGUAGE.

4. I FEEL BOUND TO SAY YET AGAIN THAT IN THE POST-INTERIM PERIOD, DEMILITARIZATION OF OR EXTERNAL GUARANTEES FOR THE WEST BANK ARE SIMPLY NOT SUFFICIENT FOR ANY CONCEIVABLE ISRAELI GOVERNMENT. ALMOST EVERY ISRAELI OF WHATEVER POLITICAL STRIPE IS CONVINCED THAT SOME IDF UNITS MUST REMAIN ON THE WEST BANK FOR AN EXTENDED PERIOD. ONE OF OUR EARLY OBJECTIVES AT CAMP DAVID SHOULD BE TO MAKE CLEAR TO BEGIN THAT IN THE U.S. VIEW THE IDF ON THE WEST BANK HAS, FOR THE FORESEEABLE FUTURE AND BEYOND THE FIVE-YEAR INTERIM PERIOD, A CENTRAL ROLE TO PLAY IN MAINTAINING ISRAEL'S SECURITY. IF WE CAN GET SADAT'S AGREEMENT TO THIS, IT WILL MEAN A GREAT DEAL HERE, PERHAPS MORE THAN ANY OTHER SINGLE CONCESSION ON HIS PART. AND IT WILL BE A POWERFUL LEVER ON BEGIN WITH
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RESPECT TO OTHER ELEMENTS OF THE PROBLEM.

5. WITH RESPECT TO SADAT'S INABILITY TO CONCLUDE AN ARRANGEMENT CONCERNING THE WEST BANK, I ACCEPT HERMANN'S VIEW THAT SADAT ALONE CANNOT MAKE IT STICK. INDEED, DAYAN HAS BELIEVED THIS FOR SOME TIME. THIS HAS LED HIM TO WONDER WHETHER MODERATE WEST BANK PALESTINIANS MIGHT BE PERSUADED TO ENDORSE PUBLICLY AND PARTICIPATE IN THE INTERIM REGIME, WITH TACIT SUPPORT IF NOT OPEN APPROVAL FROM HUSSEIN.

6. IN THIS CONNECTION, YIGAL ALLON TOLD ME LAST WEEK THAT SHORTLY AFTER THE 1970 JORDANIAN CRISIS, HE MET SECRETLY WITH HUSSEIN AND SUGGESTED THAT THE GOI COULD SET UP AN AUTONOMOUS PALESTINIAN REGIME ON THE WEST BANK, IF HUSSEIN WOULD ENCOURAGE HIS SUPPORTERS ON THE WEST BANK TO COOPERATE. WITH HUSSEIN AND ISRAEL BEHIND THEM, THESE MODERATE PALESTINIANS WOULD END UP IN CONTROL OF THE NEWLY ESTABLISHED WEST BANK SELF-RULE AUTHORITY AND THE PLO WOULD BE EFFECTIVELY FROZEN OUT. HUSSEIN UNDERSTOOD THAT OF COURSE HE WOULD NOT HAVE TO ENDORSE THE ARRANGEMENT PUBLICLY, BUT ONLY GIVE IT HIS PRIVATE SUPPORT. ACCORDING TO ALLON, HUSSEIN WAS QUITE ENTHUSIASTIC ABOUT

THIS IDEA AT THAT TIME. HOWEVER, WHEN ALLON SUBSEQUENTLY TRIED TO SELL IT TO THE ISRAELI CABINET, INCLUDING DAYAN, HE FOUND HIMSELF ISOLATED AND HAD THEN TO SEND AN APOLOGETIC MESSAGE TO HUSSEIN EXPLAINING THAT THE GOI WOULD NOT GO ALONG. IF ACCURATE, THIS HISTORY HELPS EXPLAIN HUSSEIN'S CURRENT SKEPTICISM.

7. THE CURRENT HAS SWEPT US A GOOD DISTANCE SINCE 1970, BUT IT SEEMS TO ME THIS GENERAL IDEA OFFERS THE BEST, PERHAPS THE ONLY WAY OUT OF THE CURRENT WEST BANK IMPASSE. BEGIN WILL NOT NOW AGREE TO RENOUNCE ISRAEL'S CLAIM TO SOVEREIGNTY OVER THE WEST BANK. AS I UNDERSTAND IT, SADAT REJECTS ANY TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE WHICH MEANS ANYTHING MORE THAN A MINOR MODIFICATION OF THE '67 BORDERS.

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S E C R E T SECTION 02 OF 02 TEL AVIV 11009

EXDIS HANDLE AS NODIS CHEROKEE

FOR THE SECRETARY, ATHERTON AND SAUNDERS ONLY

FROM AMBASSADOR

ALTHOUGH THERE IS A MAJORITY IN ISRAEL WHICH WOULD ACCEPT THE PRINCIPLE OF TERRITORIAL COMPROMISE, WHAT THAT MAJORITY--INCLUDING THE LABOR OPPOSITION--HAS IN MIND AT PRESENT IS NO DOUBT FAR BEYOND WHAT SADAT COULD AGREE TO. OUR BEST BET THEREFORE IS TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF BEGIN'S

OWN AUTONOMY IDEA, MAKE MUCH MORE OF IT THAN HE HIMSELF HAS DONE, PULL OUT ALL STOPS TO GET HIM TO UNAMBIGUOUSLY COMMIT HIMSELF NOW TO A RESOLUTION OF THE SOVEREIGNTY ISSUE AFTER FIVE YEARS, AND THEN SEEK TO MARSHAL MODERATE WEST BANK PARTICIPATION IN AND TACIT HUSSEIN SUPPORT FOR THAT INTERIM ARRANGEMENT. THE SAUDIS WOULD CERTAINLY HAVE TO HELP.

8. IT IS EVEN POSSIBLE THAT WE CAN USE BEGIN'S AUTONOMY PLAN AS A LEVER TO HALT ISRAELI SETTLEMENT ACTIVITY IN THE WEST BANK. LOGICALLY SPEAKING, IF MILITARY GOVERNMENT AND ISRAELI RULE ENDS ON THE WEST BANK, THE PUBLIC LANDS WOULD COME UNDER THE ADMINISTRATIVE RESPONSIBILITY OF THE NEW PALESTINIAN COUNCIL. THAT COUNCIL PRESUMABLY WOULD DECIDE NOT TO ALLOW FURTHER ISRAELI SETTLEMENT ON
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PUBLIC LANDS. IF WE COULD SOMEHOW WRING THIS OUT OF THE GOI, IT WOULD INSIST THAT INDIVIDUAL ISRAELIS RETAIN THE RIGHT TO BUY PRIVATE PROPERTY ON THE WEST BANK IF THEY COULD FIND AN ARAB WHO WOULD SELL IT TO THEM. THIS IS JUST ONE EXAMPLE OF HOW WE MIGHT TAKE THE AUTONOMY PLAN, WHICH BEGIN CONTINUALLY SAYS IS OPEN TO NEGOTIATION, AND USE IT TO TRY TO MOVE HIM TOWARD AGREEMENT TO A TRULY SELF-GOVERNING PALESTINIAN AUTHORITY ON THE WEST BANK AND IN GAZA, AN AUTONOMOUS AUTHORITY WHICH SADAT COULD THEN SELL TO ARAB MODERATES AS A FIRST AND SIGNIFICANT STEP TOWARD PALESTINIAN SELF-DETERMINATION.

9. WILL SAVE OTHER THOUGHTS UNTIL I HAVE A CHANCE TO REVIEW THE PAPERS IN WASHINGTON THIS WEEK. UNDOUBTEDLY I'M ALREADY CARRYING A LOT OF UNNECESSARY COALS TO NEWCASTLE. LEWIS

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